(c) the action Government are taking to recover the amount of TDS from these institutions?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Any income by way of salary or any sum by way of fees for professional services paid or payable by the hospitals or nursing homes to the doctors is liable for tax deduction at source under the provisions of section 192 and section 194J of the Income Tax Act, 1961, respectively.

Any income by way of salary paid or payable by coaching institutes to the teachers or the professors is liable for tax deduction at source under the provisions of section 192 of the Income Tax Act, 1961.

However, exemption from deduction of tax at source has also been provided in the law under certain situations.

(b) Instances of non-deduction or non-deposit of TDS by medical and educational institutions come to the notice of the field-units of Income tax Department during the course of investigation of cases and action as appropriate under the law is taken against such defaulters. However, the Department does not maintain a central database of such instances. For information relating to such cases, each individual case-record will be required to be examined and the same would involve substantial time and effort, which may not be commensurate to the purpose sought to be achieved.

(c) Legal action for recovery of tax, interest and penalty, including issue of notices, attachment of bank accounts, attachment and sale of immovable property, etc is taken against all defaulters including the hospitals, nursing homes and coaching institutes to recover the amount of TDS not deducted or not deposited by them.

Programme on improvement of Oil Sector

*28. SHRI R. P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a comprehensive 17-Point Programme has been drawn up to improve the performance of the oil sector to achieve long term oil security for the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the present status of its implementation?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) At a routine review meeting taken by Minister (P&NG) sixteen points for priority action were identified, including several relating to energy security issues in India and abroad. As for as it relates to the Hydrocarbons sector, these points comprise the following elements:—

(i) Increased exploration for hydrocarbon in domestic acreages under New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP). Bids for 20 blocks under the Fifth round of NELP closed on 31.5.2005 to an overwhelming response from domestic as well as foreign companies. By the bid closing date, 69 bids were received which has been the highest compared to earlier rounds.

(ii) Measures for Improved and Enhanced Oil Recovery (IOR/EOR) from producing/ageing fields;

(iii) Acquisition of overseas oil and gas reserves through acquisition of equity or Participating Interest (PI) in exploration acreages or producing properties;

(iv) Creation of strategic reserves;

(v) Exploration of non-conventional fossil fuels like Coal Bed Methane, Gas Hydrates and Underground Coal Gasification;

(vi) Bringing oil/gas through trans-national pipelines.

Delay in Supply of Gas Cylinders in Kerala

*29. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether public sector companies reduced the distribution of number of refilled cooking gas cylinders in various districts of Kerala recently;

(b) if so, whether there was delay in receiving refilled cooking gas cylinders in various districts of Kerala in June, 2005 and thereafter;

(c) the reasons for the delay in receiving refilled cooking gas cylinders;

(d) the action taken, if any, to avoid delay; and